

Spanish for Migrants Program Marks Ninth Year, Certifies 50 Students in Chile's Maule Region

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The ninth edition of the Spanish for Migrants Program recognized the perseverance and steady progress of Haitian migrants in Talca and Curic who are learning Spanish. Launched nearly a decade ago, the initiative has become a distinctive, high-impact effort across the territory—proof that language can be a powerful bridge for inclusion.

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and Centro Educacional Apumanque—allowing far more children to join classes and driving a 555% increase in participation.

Driven since 2016 by Dr. Giselle Bahamondes, a scholar at the Faculty of Education Sciences at Universidad Católica del Maule (UCM), together with eight volunteers from the School of Spanish Language and Communication, the program embodies UCM's service mission. It has strengthened into a free resource for migrants in Talca and Curicó and a concrete pathway to social integration.

«This year we focused on students from various schools in the commune of Curic who joined the initiative and committed to accompany and track the progress of children and adolescents, while we worked with them on Spanish instruction. The partnerships we have forged with some schools are a strong incentive for others to get involved as well, trusting that the work we do is serious and centered on holistic learning—so that the Spanish language never becomes a barrier to their development,» said the UCM academic and program coordinator.

In that context, the authorities present—and coordinator Dr. Giselle Bahamondes—praised the work of trainee teachers, noting that language instruction happens in a highly challenging environment and that participation in the program helps shape a new graduate profile.



For student Romina Vsquez, this teaching practice has profoundly enriched her teacher training: «I think it is one of the most wonderful experiences I've had because it opened new doors and showed us how to

structure instruction step by step. We understood that education is a continual process, and that every student carries a story.»

Meanwhile, Losder Lebrun highlighted by volunteer Natalia Fuentes expressed his delight at earning certification: «First of all, I am very thankful to the teachers for their patience with us. It isn't easy to learn a language that isn't your mother tongue, but it was beautiful and rewarding. Every language is exceptional for us because, whether we like it or not, when you go to another country you will need the language.»

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